

Message Text

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-----012677 091313Z /42
O 091300Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:EEWT, BU

SUBJECT: BULGARIAN-US ECONOMIC COUNCIL

1. THE MEETING OF THE BULGARIAN-US ECONOMIC COUNCIL SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER WILL HAVE TO BE POSTPONED; THE US CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (HASFURTHER) TOLD US TODAY THAT IT HAS JUST CANVASSED THE US SIDE OF THE COUNCIL AND FOUND THAT NONE OF THE MEMBERS ARE INTERESTED IN A SEPTEMBER MEETING; SEVERAL SUGGESTED THE COUNCIL BE DISBANDED; OTHERS OPTED FOR POSTPONEMENT. HASFURTHER IS ALSO DISMAYED BY THE APPARENT LACK OF INTEREST ON THE BULGARIAN SIDE; HE HAS REPEATEDLY TELEXED THE BULGARIAN CHAMBER FOR INFORMATION ON SUCH MATTERS AS THE AGENDA AND ACCOMDATIONS FOR THE MEETING; THE BULGARIAN SIDE HAS ACKNOWLEDGED HIS CABLES, BUT SENT NO SUBSTANTIVE REPLY UNTIL AUGUST 4, WHEN HASFURTHER RECEIVED SOME COMMENTS ON THE AGENDA.

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2. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THIS SITUATION. WE WONDER WHY THE BULGARAINS HAVE BEEN SO LACKADAISICAL IN THEIR RESPONSES IF THEY HAVE A SERIOUS INTEREST IN MFN. HASFURTHER IS TRYING TO PERSUADE MAY, AND PERHAPS A FEW OTHER MEMBERS OF THE US SIDE, TO TRAVEL TO SOFIA IN SEPT-EMBER TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE COUNCIL. HE HOPES TO

RESCHEDULE THE COUNCIL MEETING FOR SPRING, 1979.

3. HASFURTHER HAS NOT INFORMED THE BULGARIANS YET. BEFORE HE INFORMS THEM, HE WANTS TO GET MAY'S ASSURANCE THAT MAY WILL VISIT BULGARIA IN SEPTEMBER. WE WOULD WELCOME THE EMBASSY'S COMMENTS. CHRISTOPHER

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